

Inspection of Livesey Saint Francis' Church of England School

Cherry Tree Lane, Cherry Tree, Blackburn, Lancashire BB2 5NX

Inspection dates: 21–22 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Early years provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The quality of pupils' learning in different subjects has varied too much since the last full inspection of the school in 2014. The school has been on a roller coaster of change. Many staff have changed or been off work at a time when important improvements to the teaching of the national curriculum were needed. The upheaval in staffing at the school has negatively affected the quality of leadership, teaching and pupils' learning.

In the past year, leaders and governors have started to improve their work and that of the staff team. Children in the early years gain a good start to their education. Pupils throughout the school learn well in mathematics. Even so, in key stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment and progress in writing are average. From Year 1 onwards, pupils' phonics and reading skills are variable, but pupils at the end of key stage 2 read well. The quality of the curriculum in several subjects is better than it was one year ago. However, staff have much to do to ensure that pupils learn all the knowledge that they should in different subjects.

Pupils at the school are happy and behave well. They enjoy attending the breakfast club and after-school clubs such as dodgeball. Pupils feel safe at the school. They told us that bullying is rare and that staff resolve issues fully.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have improved the curriculum over the past year. Pupils now learn different units of work in a more logical order than previously. Children in the early years learn well. However, school documents do not always set out in enough detail the knowledge that pupils in key stages 1 and 2 will learn. Leaders are beginning to improve those units of work in reading, science, geography, history and art that need extra detail. However, it is too soon to see the impact of these changes on pupils' knowledge. During the inspection, some pupils told us about their recent learning in geography. They could recite interesting facts with great enthusiasm. However, some of these pupils had not learned the knowledge that the national curriculum sets out that they should.

Leaders have successfully improved the school's curriculum in mathematics from Reception to Year 6. Pupils enjoy this subject and achieve well. They told us that staff successfully help them to explain their reasoning when working out answers to problems. They find mathematics challenging and rewarding. A typical pupil comment was: 'I used to really struggle with mathematics, but now I don't, because of the support from staff.'

The curriculum for reading in key stage 1 is not well developed. Pupils' phonics and reading skills should be better. Some teachers and teaching assistants have too little up-to-date knowledge of teaching pupils to read. In contrast, staff in Reception have completed recent training. Their better knowledge is helping them to ensure that the youngest children learn to communicate, say rhymes and read well. The books that

teachers select for pupils to practise their reading skills in key stage 1 do not precisely match the sounds that pupils already know. Older pupils in key stage 2 love reading and learning new language such as 'ample' and 'famished'. They develop their reading skills well. It is little wonder that their attainment and progress in reading are above average in Year 6.

Teaching assistants play a valued role in supporting pupils throughout the school to understand the curriculum, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). However, some teachers rely too much on teaching assistants to teach pupils with SEND. Some teachers depend too much on teaching assistants to listen to pupils' read. This means that some pupils do not develop their knowledge as strongly as they should.

Pupils at the school are keen to learn. They told us that staff give them the emotional and behavioural support that they need to feel calm and settled in lessons. Older pupils take seriously their roles to model good behaviour for younger pupils. Pupils' behaviour is good. 'Hot chocolate Friday' is popular with pupils, when some gain recognition for their efforts or achievement through a celebratory meeting with the headteacher.

Pupils respect other people that may look, speak or live differently from themselves. However, leaders do not plan well enough for pupils' personal development, except in the early years and Year 6. This holds back pupils from being fully ready for their future lives as British citizens.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors make sure that the school premises are safe and secure. They know the local safeguarding risks to pupils and how the school responds to protect pupils. Leaders ensure that staff are well trained and up to date in their knowledge of safeguarding. Leaders and staff act properly to support individual pupils and to link with other agencies. Pupils learn to keep themselves safe, including when online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders' plans for some units of work in the school's curriculum do not include enough detail about what precisely pupils will learn. This includes in reading, science, geography, history and art. Not all teachers give enough attention to teaching the curriculum to pupils with SEND. Some teachers leave too much work to teaching assistants. These weaknesses mean that pupils may miss learning some of the essential information that they need to know. Leaders should make certain that they and staff plan every subject in enough detail. They should ensure that all teachers teach the curriculum fully to each pupil.

- Some leaders and staff lack up-to-date knowledge of how to teach phonics and reading. They have too little understanding of the phonics programme used at the school. Some teachers do not listen to pupils read enough. They rely too much on teaching assistants to support pupils' reading. The books that teachers select for pupils to practise their reading contain too many sounds and words that pupils do not know. These weaknesses result in pupils not reading as successfully as they should. Leaders need to ensure that all staff develop strong knowledge and expertise in phonics and the teaching of reading.
- Staff only give adequate attention to developing pupils' understanding of British values. They do not focus properly on developing pupils' career aspirations. Staff do not do enough to give pupils roles at school that will develop their personal skills. This means that pupils are not learning as well as they should. Leaders need to set high expectations for all pupils' personal development. They should plan more carefully how the school promotes these aspects of learning.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	119423
Local authority	Blackburn with Darwen
Inspection number	10122005
Type of school	Primary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	5 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	197
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Nicola Duffy
Headteacher	James Kewley
Website	www.stfranciscep.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 February 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The chair of governors and the headteacher are new to their roles in the past year. An acting deputy headteacher at the school is on loan from another school.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- We spoke with some parents and carers and reviewed 39 responses from parents to Ofsted's Parent View survey, including 21 free-text responses.
- We talked with several groups of pupils about their experiences at the school.
- We spoke with leaders and teaching staff about their work.
- We checked a sample of leaders' records about safeguarding.
- We spoke with representatives of the local authority and diocese and met with five governors, including the chair.
- We did deep dives in these subjects: reading, mathematics, science and geography. We spoke with subject leaders, visited some lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils and reviewed examples of pupils' work and leaders'

curriculum planning. The lead inspector listened to some pupils from Year 1 and Year 2 read to staff.

- We considered information about the school's curriculum in history and art.

Inspection team

Tim Vaughan, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

James Marsh

Ofsted Inspector

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